

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A wheel-lift assembly for wreckers for towing a target automobile, the assembly comprising:
 - a crossbar assembly;
 - a pair of support arms, each of said support arms being pivotally associated with the crossbar assembly at a predefined point, the support arms being spaced apart from each other in a substantially lateral direction, and defining an inbound portion of the crossbar assembly between the predefined points in the substantially lateral direction and an outbound portion of the crossbar assembly outside of the predefined points in the substantially lateral direction; and
 - a pair of actuating devices connected to said outbound portion of said crossbar assembly, respectively, each of said actuating devices being operatively connected to one of said support arms.
2. (Original) The wheel-lift assembly of claim 1, further comprising a pair of over-center locking mechanisms, each connected to said crossbar assembly, to one of the actuating devices, and to one of said support arms.
3. (Original) The wheel-lift assembly of claim 1, wherein each support arm comprises a substantially L-shaped lifting arm having an extension arm segment and an engaging arm segment, said extension arm segment adjustably connected to a respective support arm, each of said engaging arm segments being substantially transverse to the extension arm segment.
4. (Original) The wheel-lift assembly of claim 3, wherein the extension arm segments are slidably connected to the respective support arms.

5. (Original) The wheel-lift assembly of claim 2, wherein the crossbar assembly comprises a crossbar and a pair of opposed grid boxes fixedly mounted to the crossbar; wherein the support arms are pivotally attached to the grid boxes; and wherein each of the over-center locking mechanism are disposed within one of the grid boxes.

6. (Original) The wheel-lift assembly of claim 2, wherein each of the over-center locking mechanisms comprises a first and a second link, a first end of the first link being pivotally connected to a first end of the second link, a second end of the first link being pivotally connected to the crossbar assembly, and a second end of the second link being pivotally connected to one of the support arms, and wherein one of the actuating devices is pivotally connected between the first and second ends of one of the links.

7. (Original) The wheel-lift assembly of claim 5, wherein each of the overcenter locking mechanisms comprises a first and a second link, a first end of the first link being pivotally connected to a first end of the second link, a second end of the first link being pivotally connected to one of the grid boxes, and a second end of the second link being pivotally connected to one of the support arms, and wherein one of the actuating devices is pivotally connected between the first and second ends of one of the links.

8. (Original) The wheel-lift assembly of claim 1, wherein the pair of actuating devices comprise a pair of hydraulic cylinders.

9. (Original) The wheel-lift assembly of claim 1, wherein said crossbar assembly includes a pivot for mounting the target automobile on the wheel-lift assembly when the length of said target automobile is at an angle of about zero degrees to about ninety degrees from the length of said wrecker.

10. (Original) The wheel-lift assembly of claim 1, wherein the crossbar assembly comprises a crossbar and a pair of opposed grid boxes, each mounted in to the crossbar in the outbound portion of the crossbar assembly;

wherein each of the grid boxes substantially fully encloses each of the actuating devices.

11. (Original) The wheel-lift assembly of claim 10, further comprising a pair of over-center locking mechanisms, each connected to said crossbar assembly, to one of the actuating devices, and to one of said support arms, wherein each of the grid boxes substantially fully encloses each of the over-center locking mechanisms.

12.-13. (Canceled)

14. (Currently Amended) The wheel-lift assembly of claim 1, wherein the pair of support arms each have a first ~~distal~~ end and a second ~~distal~~ end, further comprising reinforcing steel secured proximate to one of the first ~~distal~~ end and the second ~~distal~~ end of each arm creating wear zone on the support arm corresponding to an area not reinforced by the reinforcing steel.

15. (Currently Amended) The wheel-lift assembly of claim 14, wherein the reinforcing steel segments are secured proximate to both the first ~~distal~~ end and the second ~~distal~~ end of each arm ~~creating~~.

16. (Original) The wheel-lift assembly of claim 14, wherein the reinforcing steel are secured to at least one side of the support arm.

17. (Original) The wheel-lift assembly of claim 14, wherein the reinforcing steel reinforces a corresponding reinforcement area to a strength greater than that of the wear zone.

18. (Original) The wheel-lift assembly of claim 17, wherein the strength of the wear zone is at least 100 ksi.

19.-25. (Canceled)

26. (Currently Amended) A wheel-lift assembly for wreckers, the assembly comprising:

a crossbar assembly comprising a crossbar extending in a substantially lateral direction and a pair of opposed grid boxes mounted to the crossbar on an outbound portion of the crossbar and extending in the substantially lateral direction;

a pair of support arms, each of said support arms being pivotally attached to one of the grid boxes, the support arms being spaced apart from each other; a pair of actuating devices, each of said actuating devices being fixed relative to the outbound portion of the crossbar and fully enclosed in the grid boxes;

a pair of over-center locking mechanisms, each connected to one of the grid boxes, to one of the actuating devices, and to one of said support arms; and

reinforcing steel secured proximate to at least one of ~~[[the]]~~ a first ~~distal~~ end and ~~[[the]]~~ a second ~~distal~~ end of each support arm creating wear zone on the support arm corresponding to an area not reinforced by the reinforcing steel,

wherein the outbound portion of the crossbar is a portion of the crossbar that is outside of where the support arms pivotally attach to the grid boxes.

27. (Currently Amended) A wrecker for towing a vehicle, the wrecker comprising:

a tow vehicle chassis;

a wheel-lift assembly comprising:

a crossbar assembly;

a pair of support arms, each of said support arms being pivotally associated with the crossbar assembly at a predefined point, the support arms being spaced apart from each other in a substantially lateral direction, and defining an inbound portion of the crossbar assembly between the predefined points in the substantially lateral direction and an outbound portion of the crossbar assembly outside of the predefined points in the substantially lateral direction; and

a pair of actuating devices connected to said outbound portion of said crossbar assembly, respectively, each of said actuating devices being operatively connected to one of said support arms.

28. (Canceled)

29. (Previously Presented) The wheel-lift assembly of claim 1, wherein each of said support arms are pivotally connected to the crossbar assembly.

30. (Previously Presented) The wheel-lift assembly of claim 29, wherein each of said support arms are directly connected to the crossbar assembly.

31. (Previously Presented) The wheel-lift assembly of claim 26, wherein each of said support arms are directly attached to one of the grid boxes.

32. (Previously Presented) The wrecker of claim 27, wherein each of said support arms are pivotally connected to the crossbar assembly.

33. (Previously Presented) The wrecker of claim 32, wherein each of said support arms are directly connected to the crossbar assembly.

34. (Currently Amended) A wrecker comprising:
a wheel lift having a crossbar extending in a substantially lateral direction;
first and second support arms having ends pivotally supported at the crossbar, the ends of first and second support arms being spaced apart from each other in the substantially lateral direction and visually separating the crossbar into an inbound portion, a first outbound portion and a second outbound portion, the inbound portion being located between the ends of the first and second support arms, the outbound portions being located at opposite sides of the respective first and second support arms;
a first actuating device supported at the first outbound portion and operatively connected to the first support arm; and

a second actuating device supported at the second outbound portion and operatively connected to the second support arm.

35. (Previously Presented) The wrecker of claim 34, wherein the crossbar includes a first grid box located at the first outbound portion and a second grid box located at the second outbound portion.

36. (Previously Presented) The wrecker of claim 35, wherein the first grid box substantially encloses the first actuating device and the second grid box substantially encloses the second actuating device.

37. (Previously Presented) The wrecker of claim 36, wherein the first grid box includes a first access panel and the second grid box includes a second access panel, the first and second access panels are configured to provide a user with access to the first actuating device and the second actuating device respectively.

38. (Previously Presented) The wrecker of Claim 34, further comprising first and second over-center locking mechanisms, each of the first and second over-center locking mechanisms connected between respective grid boxes, actuating devices and support arms.